



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Tabaković Dženeta

Title: Peace and Security in post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina

Programme/year: International Security Studies, 2015/2016

Author of Evaluation (external assessor): Hana Oberpfalzerová

Criteria	Definition	Maximm	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	30
<i>Total</i>		<i>80</i>	59
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	7
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	3
<i>Total</i>		<i>20</i>	15
TOTAL		100	74



Evaluation

Major criteria:

a) Research question

The research question is correct ("to what extent the Dayton Agreement has solidified the constructed ethnic divisions and hatreds" and which way it "legitimizes the political elites' quest for securitizing ethnic identity of the respective groups"). The title of the thesis is too general though and it would merit to have a subtitle which would specify what the thesis is really about.

The topic of the thesis is highly relevant and important, but its formulation is slightly confused as it should entail an explanation of why only nationalism was chosen for analysis as a dimension of the ethnic identity securitization, and not the whole of identity with its historical myths, symbols, religion or other elements (although they, too, are being dealt with in a certain measure).

b) Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework is correct and relevant but it misses some elements. It is correct in dealing with constructivist theory of state's self-definition and elite manipulation of identity, of ethno-religious nationalism and securitization. It does however not contain a definition or theory of ethnic identity as such, a central concept of the thesis (it only mentions some of its elements within the symbolist theory of nationalism). It lacks the theory of manipulative elites as a cause of war (for example Gagnon 1994) which would specify in further detail the influence of elites on armed conflict. On the other hand, the theoretical part directly applies the theories to Bosnia, which, in my opinion, belongs to the empirical part of the thesis.

The theory lacks a description of the methodology used and it only has a conceptualization but not an operationalization.



c) Analysis and Argument

The depth of the analysis is sufficient, however the text should contain more analysis than description (the ratio is roughly 50:50 or a little bit less). The thesis does apply the theories it is based on, although in chapter 4 not explicitly enough and not through a clear operationalization and connection of theory with the data. The thesis consists of an empirical analysis of secondary sources. The argumentation is fluent and logical, although the structure of the thesis is not always so and some chapters (such as “Background”) should be either better elaborated or left out. The main empirical part is said to “examine the constructed divisions and securitization of ethnic identity” (p. 45) but a clear explanation of why the single elements of this chapter were selected instead of others is missing (although they are indeed relevant). The analysis of the securitization of ethnic identity in the post-war period is not explicit enough. Furthermore, the selection of the topics in part 4 does not seem to clearly stem from the theoretical chapter or from a literature review (a clear literature review is missing) and it does not include issues such as war crime trials, legislation or a deeper analysis of the political and electoral system. Within the framework of the argumentation line such as it was delineated, the research question is properly addressed, with the exception of the chapter on media which is somewhat shallow and concentrated on one event only. The actual results are however not very clear as in chapter 4, the author does not explicitly refer back to theory and does not summarize the findings in the conclusion in enough detail.

Minor criteria:

a) Sources

The thesis is mostly based on secondary sources, and some newspaper articles. The total amount of sources is sufficient, but some empirical chapters of the thesis rely mainly on one source only (chapters 4.2, 4.5. and 4.6.2.). A greater variety and a critical evaluation of the sources would have been desirable.

b) Writing Style

The writing style is appropriate, the author should just pay more attention to the use of the word „aggressor“ which is mainly used by Bosniaks. The thesis contains very few grammatical errors and it cannot be reproached anything in this respect.



c) Formal criteria

The thesis has an appropriate length and it does fulfill the formal requirements, except for the citation norm. The author cites where she is supposed to, but the form of the citations is not unified in all places and many citations are not complete, lacking data such as the author institution, publisher and place the work was published, volume and issue numbers and page ranges of scientific articles. The layout is satisfactory, although page breaks in the end of each partial chapter are unnecessary.

The titles of the thesis and some of its parts are too generic or too short ("War 1992 – 1995", "War and peace"). The introduction and conclusion are too short and the conclusion does not summarize the findings enough in detail.

Overall evaluation:

The thesis is a solid work on the topic it aims to deal with. It has a correct research aim that it does more or less respond to, although chapter 4 which contains the main analysis is not explicitly linked to the theoretical chapter and it should be based on a wider range of sources. The theoretical chapter itself is somewhat selective and it does not contain an explicit definition of (ethnic) identity. The thesis lacks operationalization and a description of the methodology used altogether. The empirical part does not explain why the single issues were selected for analysis instead of others, and some are not included. The conclusion is too short and it does not summarize the findings or link theory and empirics in sufficient detail, for which reason the answers to the research questions are in a large part to be deducted by the reader.

Because of the lack of methodology, operationalization, lack of clarity and the errors in the citation norm I suggest the grade "very good".

Suggested grade:

Very good

Signature: